

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7323

INFO AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

USLO PEKING

UNCLAS PARIS 05856

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CB

SUBJECT: SIHANOUK INTERVIEW WITH MONDE CORRESPONDENT

1. ARTICLE WRITTEN BY MONDE CORRESPONDENT ALAIN BOUC AND PUBLISHED IN MARCH 7 EDITION REPORTED A RECENT INTERVIEW WITH SIHANOUK. SIHANOUK'S COMMENTS WERE IN GENERAL ALONG THE LINES OF HIS MANY OTHER RECENT STATEMENTS TO THE PRESS. HE RIDICULED THE STATEMENT BY MEMBERS OF US CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION WHO VISITED INDOCHINA THAT THERE WOULD BE A BLOODBATH IF AND WHEN THE KC TOOK OVER. SIHANOUK SAID IENG SARY HAD REPORTED THAT THE IN-COUNTRY FORCES GAVE A FORMAL GUARANTEE THAT THERE WOULD BE NO BLOODBATH, NO REPRISALS. SIHANOUK SAID THAT THE KHMER ARE OPPORTUNISTS, AND WITH VICTORY THEY WILL ALL SWEAR ALLEGIANCE TO KHIEU SAMPHAN AND THE KHMERS ROUGES. IT WILL END LIKE A FESTIVAL "WITH MUSIC, FLOWERS AND SONGS."

2. SIHANOUK SAID THE ARGUMENT ABOUT A BLOOD-BATH WAS NOT SINCERE; THE US REALLY FEARED THE FALL OF CAMBODIA FOR ITS "DOMINO" EFFECT. SIHANOUK WENT ON TO INDICATE THAT THE KHMERS ROUGES VICTORY WOULD INDEED HAVE AN UNCLASSIFIED

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IMPACT ON THAILAND WHICH WOULD LOSE ITS ROLE AS BASE FOR

THE US. THE VICTORY WOULD ENCOURAGE THE INSURGENTS IN THAILAND AND LAOS. AS FOR SOUTH VIETNAM, "OUR NEUTRALITY DOES NOT MEAN THAT IN VIETNAM WE WILL REMAIN NEUTRAL WITH RESPECT TO NGUYEN VAN THIEU. WE SHALL HAVE A SOLIDARITY IN MANY WAYS WITH THE BROTHER PEOPLE OF VIETNAM." SIHANOUK THEN SPOKE OF THE IMPACT ON SINGAPORE, MALAYSIA, INDONESIA, PHILIPPINES, TAIWAN AND KOREA.

3. SIHANOUK SAID THAT ONE CONDITION FOR THE STRUGGLE'S ENDING IN A FESTIVAL WAS THAT THE US STOP ITS INTERFERENCE. IF THE US RECOGNIZES REALITY, STOPS AID TO PHNOM PENH AND DEALS WITH THE KHMERS ROUGES, THEN THE US CAN MAINTAIN ITS EMBASSY. "OUR VICTORY IS INEVITABLE FOR THE END OF THIS YEAR....IN FACT, IF THE US WERE TO SUSPEND ITS AID, THE FINAL VICTORY WOULD BE A QUESTION OF DAYS."

4. SIHANOUK REITERATED HIS DETERMINATION NOT TO PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN INTERNAL CAMBODIAN POLITICS DESPITE THE KHMERS ROUGES REQUEST THAT HE DO SO.

5. WE ARE POUCHING THE TEXT OF THE ARTICLE TO EA/LC AND EMBASSY PHNOM PENH.
RUSH

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